



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

May 10, 2011

Motion

Proposed No. 2011-0208.1

Sponsors Ferguson, Hague, Phillips,
Patterson and McDermott

1 A MOTION relating to county efforts to reduce climate
2 pollution and prepare for the effects of climate change on
3 the environment, human health and the economy and to
4 minimize King County's operational environmental
5 footprint; and rescinding Motion 12362.

6 WHEREAS, there is consensus among the world's leading scientists, including
7 the National Academies and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, that human
8 sources of climate pollution such as carbon dioxide and methane are causing
9 unprecedented and severe changes in global and local climate systems, and the related
10 impacts are among the most significant environmental challenges facing the world, and

11 WHEREAS, climate scientists at the University of Washington report that
12 significant changes to the Pacific Northwest climate are causing environmental changes
13 including decreasing mountain snowpack and increasing flooding, and are negatively
14 impacting infrastructure, forests, salmon, human health and the Puget Sound, and

15 WHEREAS, King County's diversity of natural habitats and species, known as
16 biodiversity, helps to support pollination of crops, flood and erosion control, fisheries and
17 recreation, and

18 WHEREAS, climate change is causing increased stress and changes in
19 distribution of plant and animal species due to vegetation range shifts, streamflow

20 changes, invasive species invasions and increased freshwater and marine water
21 temperatures, and

22 WHEREAS, left unaddressed, human induced changes to the climate system will
23 severely impact economic prosperity and quality of life in King County and elsewhere,
24 and

25 WHEREAS, buildings account for thirty-five percent of greenhouse gas emissions
26 that occur in King County, and

27 WHEREAS, transportation accounts for forty-eight percent of greenhouse gas
28 emissions that occur in King County, and

29 WHEREAS, King County citizens, businesses, and governments also share
30 responsibility for the greenhouse gas emissions associated with goods and services that
31 are produced outside the region and consumed locally, and

32 WHEREAS, projects that reduce climate pollution, such as energy efficiency
33 improvements, can have multiple benefits to the county and its citizens, including
34 reducing operating costs and creating new revenue sources for King County government,
35 improving public health, and building a green economy, and

36 WHEREAS, the integration of land use and transportation planning to create
37 vibrant urban communities where residents can conveniently walk, bicycle, van pool, ride
38 share or take transit to places of work, school and shopping can reduce climate pollution
39 and improve health, and

40 WHEREAS, protecting and restoring natural areas such as wetlands and forests
41 naturally sequesters carbon dioxide and also supports a healthy and robust ecosystem that
42 is more resilient to local climate change impacts, and

43 WHEREAS, actions to reduce climate pollution support many other county
44 priorities from protecting the Puget Sound to addressing health inequities among King
45 County residents, to building a green economy, and

46 WHEREAS, the 2010 King County Strategic Plan established environmental
47 sustainability as one of King County's eight goals, and outlines objectives to reduce
48 climate pollution and prepare for the effects of climate change on the environment,
49 human health and the economy and to minimize King County's operational
50 environmental footprint, and

51 WHEREAS, the 2010 King County Energy Plan established near-term goals for
52 energy efficiency in county buildings and vehicles, promotes the use and production of
53 renewable and greenhouse gas-neutral energy, and calls for integrated monitoring and
54 reporting of climate, energy and green building outcomes, and

55 WHEREAS, RCW 70.235.020 requires that by 2020 Washington State reduce
56 overall greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels, and that by 2050 emissions are further
57 reduced to fifty percent below 1990 levels, and

58 WHEREAS, the King County Comprehensive Plan directed that the county
59 collaborate with other local governments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the
60 region to eighty percent below 2007 levels by 2050 and incorporate climate change
61 considerations into county plans, programs and projects among other related policies and
62 goals, and

63 WHEREAS, the King County green building and sustainable development
64 ordinance, Ordinance 16147, requires the incorporation of green and sustainable practices
65 into the design, construction and operation of capital improvement projects to reduce

66 greenhouse gas emissions, reduce energy and other operating costs and create healthier
67 and more appealing environments for the public, and

68 WHEREAS, the 2011 King County Board of Health Planning for Healthy
69 Communities Guidelines call for residents in all communities in King County to have
70 access to safe and convenient opportunities for physical activity and exercise that will
71 result in a cobenefit of reducing vehicle miles traveled and reducing climate pollution,
72 and

73 WHEREAS, people located within one mile of public amenities such as regional
74 trails are more likely to access those trails for mobility and recreation, which will result in
75 a co-benefit of reducing vehicle miles traveled and reducing climate pollution, and

76 WHEREAS, climate policies were integrated throughout the King County
77 Comprehensive Plan during the last major update in 2008, and the next major
78 Comprehensive Plan update in 2012 provides an opportunity to revise climate goals and
79 policies to reflect new direction from Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2040 and
80 the updated King County Countywide Planning Policies, and

81 WHEREAS, the Growth Management Planning Council is considering adoption
82 of a countywide planning policy calling for development of a countywide greenhouse gas
83 emissions reduction target in 2011 while integrating climate policies throughout the
84 document, and

85 WHEREAS, King County is partnering with the city of Seattle and the Puget
86 Sound Clean Air agency to update the King County geographic greenhouse gas emissions
87 inventory, assess emissions associated with all King County consumption regardless of

88 where the emissions occur, and to develop framework for assessing progress towards
89 countywide emissions reduction goals, and

90 WHEREAS, emissions from King County operations represent only a small
91 percentage of all King County greenhouse gas emissions, and significant progress in
92 meeting emissions reduction targets can only happen through collaborative action at a
93 countywide scale, and

94 WHEREAS, King County is carrying out a wide range of transportation, land use,
95 open space and resource land protection, land management, energy efficiency, green
96 building, waste reduction, recycling and outreach initiatives to reduce climate pollution
97 and prepare for the inevitable impacts of climate change, and

98 WHEREAS, long-term and significant reductions in climate pollution will only be
99 achieved through commitments to specific targets and actions and to reduce climate
100 pollution and by assessing the results of these actions, and

101 WHEREAS, the climate and energy motion, Motion 12362, adopted in 2006
102 outlined a series of near-term actions and opportunities related to climate change and
103 should be updated;

104 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

105 A. Motion 12362 is hereby rescinded.

106 B. With respect to conducting emissions inventories, establishing greenhouse gas
107 emissions reduction targets and performance measures, and ensuring accountability:

108 1. The county will continue its collaboration in 2011 with the city of Seattle and
109 the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency to finalize new King County countywide greenhouse

gas emissions inventories and use the data to guide projects, programs and policies that best support community-scale emissions reductions;

2. The county, through its participation in the Growth Management Planning Council, will collaborate with cities to develop a countywide-level emissions reduction target that is informed by the recent emissions inventory work and meets or exceeds the current state requirements for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This includes establishing a 2020 goal for reduction of net energy use and greenhouse gas emissions from King County operations informed by recent emissions inventories and reporting protocols used by the National Climate Registry;

3. As part of the 2012 Comprehensive Plan update, the county will review and revise its climate and energy goals as needed to ensure that it is doing its part both operationally and at the community scale to advance the emissions reduction targets being established by the growth management planning council;

4. The county will join The Climate Registry in 2011 and monitor and report greenhouse gas emissions from government operations using protocols approved by The Climate Registry beginning in 2012;

5. King County should continue to participate as a test community in the development of national standards for measuring sustainability at a community scale, through the "STAR Communities" program sponsored by ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, and use lessons learned from this effort to inform both future actions and performance measures;

6. The executive will monitor and report to the council annually on actions to reduce operational and community-scale greenhouse gas emissions as part of integrated

133 annual reporting on climate, energy, green building, and environmental purchasing
134 beginning in June 2011; and

135 7. The county will develop and report on specific climate mitigation and
136 adaptation strategies, performance measures and targets as part of the King County
137 Strategic Plan Performance Measurement Framework, and use performance findings on
138 an ongoing basis to update targets and strategies.

139 C. With respect to managing land use and transportation to reduce greenhouse
140 gas emissions:

141 1. As part of the 2012 Comprehensive Plan Update, King County will review
142 and update policies related to land use and transportation based on changes in federal and
143 state requirements, current climate science, the outcome of updated community and
144 operational emissions inventories, multicounty planning policies and updated countywide
145 planning policies;

146 2. Consistent with the 2011 King County Board of Health Planning for Healthy
147 Communities Guidelines and as part of the 2012 Comprehensive Plan Update, King
148 County will review and update policies and regulations to encourage a mix of land uses
149 with well-designed public spaces so that residents in all communities have access to safe
150 and convenient opportunities for daily physical activity and exercise, which helps prevent
151 chronic disease and premature death;

152 3. The county will work with developers, community groups and the
153 Sustainable Cities Roundtable to identify and establish additional incentives to locate
154 new development within established urban centers, use design standards that will reduce
155 energy use and greenhouse gas emissions beyond what is required by current building

156 and energy codes, and maximize carbon sequestration functions of soils and vegetation
157 through site layout and restoration. As part of this effort, the county will evaluate use of
158 the state environmental policy act review as a tool for evaluating alternatives for relative
159 greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating impacts;

160 4. The county will work with cities, the Puget Sound Regional Council, regional
161 transit agencies, and housing groups as part of implementing the Sustainable
162 Communities Grant to develop policies and strategies to encourage and guide transit
163 oriented development along high capacity corridors. As part of this effort, the county
164 will carry out a "catalyst" project around the Northgate Transit Hub, promoting integrated
165 planning and support for housing, mixed use development, and seamless connections
166 between bus and light rail transportation modes. The county will also promote transit
167 oriented development at park and ride lots around the county, including South Kirkland
168 Park and Ride. In participating in joint planning efforts for transit oriented development,
169 the county should encourage use of green building standards;

170 5. Consistent with the Regional Transit Task Force recommendations and the
171 Metro Transit Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, the county will plan transit
172 service by more closely linking employment centers and residential density to service,
173 while also ensuring social equity and considering geographic value concerns;

174 6. As funding allows, the county will expand Metro's participation in the
175 Washington state Commute Trip Reduction employer partnerships program to achieve a
176 ten percent reduction in drive alone commuting by 2015;

177 7. Building on the successful establishment of the RapidRide Line between
178 Federal Way and Tukwila in 2010, the county will continue to aggressively seek federal

179 funding to continue implementation of the RapidRide program with the following target
180 implementation dates for new lines, subject to funding availability: Bellevue to Redmond
181 in 2011; downtown Seattle to West Seattle and Ballard in 2012; downtown Seattle to the
182 King-Snohomish line in 2013; and Renton to Burien in 2013;

183 8. Consistent with the 2010 King County Energy Plan, the county will replace
184 diesel buses if sufficient funding and appropriate technologies are available to help to
185 achieve the county's energy and climate goals. In 2011, the county will take delivery of
186 one hundred ninety-four new diesel electric hybrid vehicles and continue to pursue grant
187 funding to expand the purchase of low or no emission vehicles;

188 9. The county will continue to lead efforts to promote electric vehicles and
189 participate in infrastructure improvements to support widespread adoption of this
190 technology. In 2011, King County plans to acquire twenty-five all-electric vehicles and
191 work with private employers and publically owned facilities such as park-and ride
192 garages to install approximately seventy charging stations; and

193 10. King County will continue to develop and maintain an interconnected
194 countywide system of regional trails in order to promote options for nonmotorized
195 transportation, especially in historically underserved geographies and communities with
196 poor health outcomes relative to the county population as a whole.

197 D. With respect to managing land and providing technical assistance and
198 incentives to enhance carbon sequestration and reduce greenhouse gas emissions:

199 1. King County will continue to promote the use of conservation easements on
200 private property as well as acquire, steward and restore natural public lands for ecological
201 and recreational purposes. These protected lands will provide biological carbon storage

202 in forests and soils and will help reduce local climate change impacts such as increasing
203 flooding;

204 2. The county will continue to support forestry and agriculture technical
205 assistance, tax incentives and property acquisitions as a way to offset greenhouse gas
206 emissions through carbon sequestration;

207 3. The county will launch on-line technical assistance program by the end of
208 2011 to encourage private land owners to retain and enhance forest and soil cover and
209 productivity to improve carbon sequestration and reduce climate change impacts;

210 4. The county will consider establishment of tax incentives through the public
211 benefit rating program tied to commitments by landowners to enhance carbon
212 sequestration through retention and enhancement of forest and soil cover productivity;
213 and

214 5. King County will pursue opportunities to support forest and soil management
215 and restoration projects, and conduct these projects in ways that prioritize biological
216 carbon sequestration and plan for changing climate conditions.

217 E. With respect to environmental management, emergency preparedness, and
218 preparing for impacts of climate change:

219 1. As part of the next update to the flood hazard management plan beginning in
220 2011, the county will review available information on the potential impacts of climate
221 change on winter floods, and consider these impacts in updating flood risk reduction
222 policies and capital improvements plans and projects;

223 2. The county will continue working with the Federal Emergency Management
224 Agency to update coastal flood hazard maps and will revise coastal flood hazard

development standards for Vashon Island. King County's elevation requirements for the first finished floor will continue to include a factor of safety to reflect uncertainty tied to climate change impacts on coastal flooding. The revised coastal flood hazard development standards will be transmitted to the council in 2011;

3. By the end of 2012, the county will inventory essential county facilities, including roads and wastewater treatment and conveyance facilities, that are subject to inundation or landslide risks due to sea level rise, and develop strategies for reducing risks and mitigating future damages;

4. The county, consistent with the Regional Wastewater Services Plan and Reclaimed Water Plan should evaluate alternatives for production and use of reclaimed water for industrial, irrigation and environmental restoration purposes to determine if it is a reasonable means of mitigating the climate change impacts projected to decrease summer stream flows and affect water supplies; and

5. To foster resistance and resilience to climate change in ecosystems and species, the county will prioritize the restoration of riparian vegetation to reduce warming in cold water systems, restore wetlands to reduce drought and flooding, improve connections between different habitats and protect and restore areas most likely to be resistant to climate change.

F. With respect to improving energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from county operations:

1. The county shall implement the adopted 2010 King County Energy Plan, including actions to achieve the following near-term goals: produce, use, or purchase renewable energy equal to fifty percent of total county energy requirements by 2015,

248 reduce net normalized energy usage in county buildings by ten percent by 2012 and
249 reduce net normalized energy use in county vehicles by ten percent by 2015;

250 2. The county shall develop medium and long-term energy goals in 2012 needed
251 to support achievement of the community-level greenhouse gas emissions reduction
252 targets and county operational emissions targets established through the countywide
253 planning policy update and King County Comprehensive Plan updates;

254 3. The county will continue to maximize the creation of resources from products
255 such as biogas, biosolids and heat produced by wastewater treatment and solid waste
256 disposal in a manner that produces renewable energy and reduces greenhouse gas
257 emissions;

258 4. The county will seek, subject to budget, operational, and maintenance
259 limitations, to utilize the most energy-efficient commercially viable vehicles for its fleet.
260 King County will also seek to deploy these vehicles in an energy-efficient manner
261 through vehicle routing, idling reduction, and operator practices;

262 5. Consistent with 2010 King County Energy Plan, the county will evaluate
263 options and develop policy guidance and budgeting practices for 2012 to enable county
264 agencies to capture verified operating savings from purchase of hybrid vehicles and
265 building efficiency projects, and apply the savings to up-front capital investment in
266 vehicle purchase or efficiency improvements;

267 6. The county will transition to use of one-hundred percent recycled content
268 paper in 2012 and carry out a campaign to reduce paper use by an additional 20 percent
269 by 2013;

270 7. The county will continue to provide internal training and technical assistance
271 to ensure consistent implementation of the green building and sustainable development
272 ordinance, Ordinance 16147; and

273 8. The county will continue its participation in the United States Environmental
274 Protection Agency's WasteWise program to promote internal waste prevention, recycling
275 collection and purchase of recycled products. The county will continue to quantify and
276 report the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions associated with these actions.

277 G. With respect to community outreach, education, advocacy and information
278 sharing with other local governments and universities:

279 1. As funding allows, the county will continue to participate in national and
280 regional organizations of local governments sharing strategies to reduce emissions and
281 prepare for climate change. The county will continue to advocate for federal initiatives
282 and grant programs, like the Better Buildings Initiative and Energy Efficiency
283 Community Development Block Grants, which support local investments in projects to
284 reduce energy use and efficiency while creating green jobs;

285 2. The county will continue to advocate for national emissions inventory
286 standards that recognize the unique role of local governments, particularly counties, and
287 managing land use and transportation in a manner that reduces community-scale
288 emissions;

289 3. The county will continue to carry out green building programs, which provide
290 technical assistance to local governments, businesses, non-profit organizations, and
291 residents to implement green building practices while addressing critical environmental
292 issues, such as climate change, critical habitat restoration and solid waste reduction;

293 4. The county will participate in and support the King County-Cities Climate
294 Pledge and Collaboration, a partnership between the cities of King County and King
295 County itself to increase the effectiveness of local governments' sustainability and
296 climate change efforts;

297 5. The county will continue to pursue waste reduction and recycling initiatives,
298 including education and technical assistance to cities, to divert waste from disposal and
299 reducing associated greenhouse gas emissions;

300 6. Consistent with the Regional Economic Strategy for Central Puget Sound,
301 King County will work with the business community to help identify effective and
302 efficient green manufacturing practices that reduce energy use and greenhouse gas
303 emissions, and promote King County and the Puget Sound region as a center for green
304 manufacturing. The county will also work with community groups to promote the
305 consumption of green-manufactured products;

306 7. The county will continue to partner with the University of Washington to
307 identify and plan for the impact of climate change on human health, including
308 synthesizing data on the effects of changing temperature on illness and death in King
309 County; and

310 8. The county will develop and incorporate into existing outreach efforts public
311 health messages related to the health implications of climate change, particularly in urban

312 communities, and the benefits of actions, such as using alternative transportation options
313 that simultaneously reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve public health.

314

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Larry Gossett, Chair

ATTEST:

Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, ____.

Dow Constantine, County Executive

Attachments: None